



MED GROUP SCOOP

BEALE AFB, CALIFORNIA

9th Medical Group

Volume 3, Issue 3
April 2010

TIPS FOR A SAFE SUMMER Contributed by Esther Almas

*T*his summer friends and loved ones all across the country will gather to celebrate the hot days of summer. If your summer activities include barbecues or relaxing days at the pool or beach, the American Red Cross can help you prevent emergencies and enjoy a safer season by offering the following tips:

Water safety at the pool and beach:

The best thing anyone can do to stay safe in and around the water is to learn to swim. The Red Cross has swimming courses for people of any age and swimming ability. To find out where lessons are offered or to enroll in a CPR/AED or first aid course, contact your [local Red Cross chapter](#) at 673-1460.

- Swim in a supervised, marked area with a lifeguard present, and swim with others. Never swim alone. Enter the water feet first. Enter the water headfirst only when the area is clearly marked for diving and has no obstructions.
- Adults should never leave a child unobserved around water. Practice "reach supervision" by staying within an arm's length of young children and weak swimmers while they are in and around the pool, lake or ocean.
- If you are caught in a rip current, swim parallel to the shore until you are out of the current. Once you are free, turn and swim toward shore. If you can't swim, float or tread water until you are free of the rip current and then head toward shore.
- Watch out for the "dangerous too's"; too tired, too cold, too far from safety, too much sun, too much strenuous activity.
- Post CPR instructions and directions to call 9-1-1 or your local emergency number in the pool area.
- Keep toys away from the pool when it is not in use. Toys can attract young children into the pool.
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Safe Grilling:

- Use gas and charcoal barbecue grills outside only.
- Position grills far from siding, deck railings, overhanging branches and house eaves.
- Keep children and pets at least three feet away from the grill area.
- Never add charcoal starter fluid when coals have already been ignited.
- Always follow the manufacturer's instructions when using grills.



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9th MDG Hours of Operation & Services

Family Practice, Pediatric Clinic & Physical Therapy Clinic :

M, W, F 0730-1630

T, Th 0830-1630

Laboratory, Diagnostic Imaging:

M-F, 0730-1630

Pharmacy:

M-F, 0730-1700

Optometry Clinic:

M, W 0730-1630

T, Th 0830-1630

Friday 0730-1200

Active Duty Dental Services

M-F, 0730-1630

Flight Medicine

M-F, 0730-4:30

After hours call

530-634-2941



A Message from the 9th Medical Group Commander Lt Col Kelly West

The Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality, an arm of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services is currently running a TV and radio campaign that encourages Americans to talk with their doctors, to ask questions, and seek clarification when they do not understand what they are told about a diagnosis, a treatment, or any health issue. Let me foot-stomp this from a local perspective. I'm very proud to work with 371 other customer service representatives in the 9th Medical Group, all of whom are completely dedicated to the health and safety of great people we serve. We are committed to providing the very best medical care possible. A lot can happen in a brief, 15 minute appointment, but, in the course of trying to fit it all in, technical medical jargon can sneak in or little details can be missed in the conversation. We do not want anybody to leave our clinic with unspoken questions. So, please, don't be afraid to ask us your questions or tell us what is on your mind. Talk to us. All 372 of us are here to help you.

Let me also foot-stomp another way I'd like our patients to talk with us. Last year, almost 2500 people made appointments at the Beale Clinic and then failed to show up. I recognize that the high demand for our services makes it difficult to get an appointment, at times. Just imagine how much easier 2500 extra open appointments would make it. So, again, talk to us. Please let us know if you won't make your appointment, and we'll gladly give it to somebody else.



Snake Safety Contributed by AIC Herold

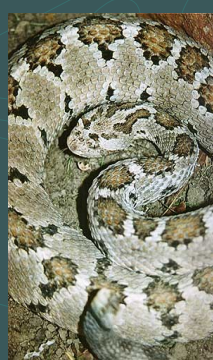
As the weather warms and we find ourselves outside more often, there is an increased chance we may encounter a snake. Below are some helpful guides and precautions to ensure an encounter with one of these unique reptiles does not end in tragedy.

The majority of snakes are not aggressive, and will either flee or give intruders clear warning before biting. Some bites, such as those inflicted when you accidentally step on a snake in the woods, are nearly impossible to prevent. However, there are precautions that can reduce your chances of being bitten by a snake. These include: remain on hiking paths and wear thick boots when traveling through tall grass, keep hands and feet out of areas you cannot see, do not pick up rocks or firewood without prior inspection, be cautious and alert when climbing rocks and upon encountering a snake, do not try to capture it or kill it. Avoid the snake at all costs!

If you find yourself a victim of a snake bite the number one rule of thumb is "To remain calm"! Take deep controlled breaths and do not attempt to run, as this will elevate your blood flow and circulate any venom that may have entered the system faster. Call and/or seek emergency help as soon as possible. If waiting for help to respond, wash out the bite area with soap and water and keep the area below the heart. Never cut off circulation to the affected wound as this may be more harmful than the snake bite itself. If possible, attempt to identify the snake without putting yourself in further danger.

Snakes and Snake Safety

- Be aware of your surroundings at all times.
- Avoid specific snake habitats
- Wear leather shoes/boots
- Never sit or climb or step over obstacles without looking first
- Observation is critical
- Near water -- be aware
- Try not to stalk
- Take a pet
- When a snake is spotted, leave it alone!
- Learn more about snakes
- Learn basic snakebite first aid
- Be in tune with your environment



California Rattlesnake



UNDERSTANDING APPOINTMENT AVAILABILITY

Contributed by Rick Browning

Welcome to the 9th Medical Group at Beale AFB. We all know that appointment availability is our biggest issue. To understand why, let's start by learning how the system works:

FACT: The average person in the United States comes to see their doctor approximately two times a year. The average person here at Beale AFB comes to the clinic more than five times a year. Some of our patients seek medical care more than 150 times a year.

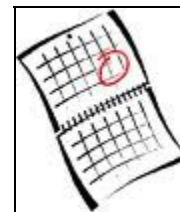
FACT: Last year the 9th Medical group had almost 50,000 face to face medical encounters. That number does not include telephone consults, referrals, Pharmacy, Dental, Physical Therapy, Optometry, Public Health, Ambulance Services or Immunizations (Immunizations alone can see up to 200 patients a day), if we counted all these, that number would far exceed 80,000!

FACT: Last year 2,462 people went to the trouble of making an appointment then failed to show up. We call these no-shows. By the time we realize the patient isn't coming, it is too late to give the appointment to someone else!

2,462 are enough appointments to serve 1,231 patients for an entire year.

FACT: Appointments unique to the military (i.e. quarters, profiles, MEB's, physical fitness) occupy a huge portion of the medical providers' day. People who have actual acute medical needs compete for those same appointments.

FACT: There are more than 9,100 people enrolled to the 9th Medical Group. We are staffed according to our beneficiary population. We have 8 providers assigned to the MDG in addition to one Women's Health Nurse Practitioner (WHNP); 3 Primary Care Physicians (PCM's), 2 Physician Assistants (PAs) in Family Practice, 2 PCMs in Pediatrics and 1 PCM assigned to Flight Medicine who provide care for those 9,100 people. With deployments, we usually have 5 to 7 providers present to handle those patients. On average our providers see 20 patients a day. When 3 providers are gone we have to absorb up to 60 appointments/day. We can do this by referrals to Urgent Care, temporarily bringing in other providers or utilizing our nursing staff to provide Home Care.



Why show up 15 minutes early?

If you show up late for your appointment, that will make the provider late for his/her next patient. This becomes a domino effect. That is why you must show up early. There is check-in, some paperwork and maybe some waiting. If you are late, your appointment could be cancelled and your PCM will move on to the next patient.

Triage

When you call for an appointment, many times you will be told a nurse will call you back. These are 'triage nurses' and their job is to assess the severity of your symptoms and guide you to the appropriate level of care. Even at the start of the day, their list of patients to call can be very long. Because of this, the nurse will contact you based on the severity of your complaint; the greater the severity of complaint, the sooner the call. On one hand: Med refills can take up to **72 hours** but on the other hand: an individual who calls with complaints that need to be addressed today, will be called back **as soon as possible!** ***If you feel your illness is a life, limb, or eyesight emergency, **immediately** call 911 or go to the nearest ER for care.

Take charge!

At Medical Right Start you are given a book that provides you with information on how to take care of yourself when the situation is not acute. Use that book to help yourself when appropriate.

Patience from Patients

We know the system is not perfect. We are constantly changing to meet the needs of the military mission. Each time we make a change, some problems are solved but new problems **will** pop up. Any constructive feedback you give us is appreciated!

Patient Advocates

IF you have tried working with your PCM team to resolve an issue and the system **still** doesn't seem to be working: call a Patient Advocate! There are Advocates located in each section. Simply ask one of the 9 MDG staff and they will escort you to the closest one. For further information you can also contact the Patient Advocate at 634-4848.



9th Medical Group

Family Advocacy Classes

OB Orientation - 3rd Wednesday of each month 9-12pm in the Clinic Conference Room at the clinic.

Breast feeding - 2nd Tuesday of every odd month 4-6pm at Family Advocacy.

Anger Awareness - Learn new techniques in decreasing your anger to a level where you are controlling your anger instead of your anger controlling you. This is a 6-week course, meeting 1-3pm Wednesdays.

Dads 101 - A class for new and expectant fathers. Next class will be July 22, 2010, 1-4pm

PREP - Prevention & Relationship Enhancement Program. A class for couples to improve their relationship. Next class begins August 3, 2010, 2-4pm.

Magic 1-2-3 - A parenting class for children ages 2-12 years of age. Next class scheduled for July 12, 2010, 10am-12pm

In Motion Cardio Walking Group - Meets every Friday at 8am at Ryden Park. Strollers and animals welcome.

Infant CPR class - Learn newborn care and Infant CPR techniques. July 8, 2010, 4-6pm. Space is limited; call to sign up.

Call Family Advocacy at 634-3423 to register or ask questions

Health and Wellness Center Upcoming Classes

DASH - Dietary Approach to Stop Hypertension, diet to assist in lowering high blood pressure.

Cholesterol Class - To assist in the lowering of high cholesterol, triglycerides, LDL and raise HDL.

Nutrition 101 - Basic nutrition education: Learn the basics of healthy eating and meal planning.

Relaxation Techniques - Learn basic relaxation techniques in a calming environment, HAWC also provides stress management, behavior changes, Microfit, running and exercise programs, and one on one nutritional counseling.

TO SIGN UP, CALL 634-3500

Did you know Family Advocacy offers **counseling services**? If you are experiencing relationship issues, or need assistance with parenting, call 634-3423 to set up an appointment. Voluntary services are kept confidential and command is not notified. Short term and long term counseling services are available from a licensed therapist right here on base!

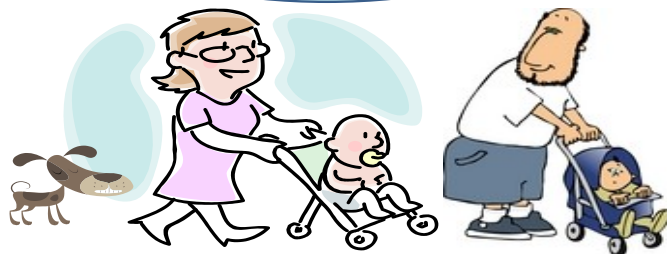


IN MOTION Cardio Walking Group

WHEN: Fridays, 8:00 am

WHERE: Meet at Ryden Park
(in base housing)

CHILDREN AND DOGS WELCOME



For more information, call Roberta 634-0626